

thought to have magical power on account of the spirits of the great dead in them. Transubstantiation was the application of magic and fetich ideas to the ceremony of the mass. All the mediaeval religiosity ran to forms of which asceticism and magic were the core. Cathedral building was a popular mania of ascetic religion. Pilgrimages had the same character. We may now regard it as ascertained fact that asceticism, cruelty to dissenters, fanaticism, and sex frenzy are so interlaced in the depths of human nature that they produce joint or interdependent phenomena. That an ascetic who despises pain, or even thinks it a good, should torture others is not hard to understand.

That the same age should produce a wild outburst of sex passion and a mania of sex renunciation is only another case of contradictory products of the same cause of which human society offers many. That the same age should produce sensual worldlings and fanatical ecclesiastics is no paradox.

691, Asceticism in Christian mores. The ascetic standards and doctrines passed into the mores of Christianity and so into the mores of Christendom, both religious and civil. In the popular notion it was the taboos which constituted Christianity, and those were the best Christians who construed the taboos on wealth, luxury, pleasure, and sex most extremely, and observed them most strictly. Such persons were supposed to be able to perform miracles. In the Middle Ages the casuists and theologians seemed never to tire of multiplying distinctions and antitheses about sex.¹ In fact their constant preoccupation with it was the worst departure from the reserve and dignity which are the first requirements in respect to it. A document of the

extremest doctrine is *Hali Meidenhad** of the
thirteenth century. The aim of the book is to persuade women to
renounce marriage. Marriage is servitude. God did not
institute it.
Adam and Eve introduced it by sin. Our flesh is our
foe. Vir-
ginity is heaven on earth. Happy wedlock is rare.
Motherhood
is painful. Family life is full of trials and quarrels.
Virginitv is
not God's command but his counsel. Marriage is
only a con-
cession (i Cor. viL). This was the orthodox
doctrine of the

* See Peter Lombard, *Sentent.*, IV, 31.
Text Soc., 1866.

² *Early Eng.*